opportunities to Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin desirous of working on short-term projects in India;

(b) if so, whether any concrete schemes in this regard have been worked out by which it would be able to spend 2-12 weeks in an Indian laboratory and work on projects;

(c) if so, the other steps that Government propose to take to provide more opportunities for the scientists of Indian origin in the country; and

(d) whether it is a fact that the Scientists and Technologists of Indian origin settled in different countries had suggested that India should pick and choose the research areas according to its own socio-economic needs?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) The Government has announced a scheme the details of which are being formulated. This scheme is entitled "Joint Project based Visit of Scientists and Technologists of Indian Origin Abroad (STIOs) into India" which will allow long term and sustained connectivity between STIOs abroad and Indian Science and Technology personnel working in academia, research laboratories and industry. STIO will be able to spend 2-12 weeks in an Indian laboratory and work on projects. The details are to be made public when full contours of the scheme are worked out.

(d) No, Sir.

New disaster warning system

1803. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to bring in a new disaster warning system in place of the existing one; and

(b) if so, the kind of deficiencies that were detected in the existing system with action plan of Government to make the system a fool-proof to take care of all kinds of natural calamities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND

TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL) (a) Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has an early warning system in place to cover cyclone induced disasters. However, for the 'Tsunami' there is no such system available at this stage. Proposal for setting up of an early warning system for Tsunamis is under active consideration of the Government.

(b) The above systems will provide an early warning for cyclones and Tsunamis. As far as earthquakes are concerned, it is not scientifically possible to predict and give an early warning.

Standards of weather forcasting

1804. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN: Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether weather forecasting in our country is upto Global Standards; and

(b) if not, the steps taken to make it upto Global Standards?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI KAPIL SIBAL): (a) and (b) The short range forecast issued by Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) is on par with other countries of the world.

IMD has been issuing forecast of seasonal rainfall during southwest monsoon, using models indigenously developed for the purpose. These models have not been able to. forecast some of the droughts in recent years due to the complex nature of the monsoon. Since no other issues seasonal forecasts in respect of the Southwest monsoon, there are no global standards to go by. However, our equipment and mathematical models need upgradation to reduce the margin of error since no science can accurately make prediction of seasonal rainfall. Besides, rainfall forecasting requires synergy between land based, space and ocean based observations for which a group has been set up to prepare new models, again to reduce the margin of error.

The medium range forecast is crucial for agricultural operations. To meet this requirement Government has started a National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF) at New Delhi. This centre is functioning under Department of Science & Technology (DST) since